

**The following claims are presented for examination:**

1. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:  
pseudo skin; and  
a palpation module for enabling a user to palpate a pseudo vein, wherein said palpation module is disposed beneath said pseudo skin, and further wherein said palpation module generates a magnetic force that opposes downward motion of said pseudo vein.
2. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:  
pseudo skin; and  
a palpation module for enabling a user to palpate a pseudo vein, wherein said palpation module is disposed beneath said pseudo skin, and further wherein said palpation module measures a change in position of said pseudo vein.
3. (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:  
pseudo skin; and  
a palpation module for enabling a user to palpate a pseudo vein, wherein said palpation module is disposed beneath said pseudo skin, and further wherein said palpation module is operable to vary a simulated stiffness of said pseudo vein.
4. (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said palpation module comprises said pseudo vein.
5. (Original) The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said pseudo vein yields to applied palpation pressure, such that it moves downward.
6. (Original) The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said pseudo vein comprises a rigid member.
7. (Original) The apparatus of claim 6 wherein said palpation module is operable to vary a simulated stiffness of said pseudo vein.
8. (Original) The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said pseudo vein can be felt, but is not visually discernable, beneath said pseudo skin.

**9.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said palpation module controllably obscures said pseudo vein under said pseudo skin such that said pseudo vein can be felt, or not felt, as desired.

**10.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 4 wherein, when said user applies a sufficient amount of force to said pseudo vein, it cannot be felt.

**11.** (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 1 wherein said a magnitude of said force is substantially constant during application of said force.

- 12.** (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:  
pseudo skin; and  
a palpation module for enabling a user to palpate a pseudo vein, wherein:  
(a) said palpation module is disposed beneath said pseudo skin;  
(b) said palpation module generates a force that opposes downward motion of said pseudo vein; and  
(c) a magnitude of said force is substantially constant during application of said force.

**13.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 12 wherein said magnitude of said force can be varied, but is constant during application.

**14.** (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 12 wherein said force is a magnetic force.

**15.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein at a minimum magnitude, said magnetic force is slightly greater than the gravitational force.

**16.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 14 wherein said magnetic force is generated by an interaction of a magnetic field that is generated by an energized coil with a magnetic field that is generated by a permanent magnet.

**17.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 3 wherein said palpation module generates a magnetic force that opposes downward motion of said pseudo vein, and wherein said simulated stiffness of said pseudo vein is varied by changing a magnitude of said magnetic force.

**18.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 4 wherein said pseudo vein yields to applied occlusion pressure, such that it moves downward, wherein downward movement is used as an indicator that an occlusion technique has been performed.

**19.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 1 further comprising a skin-stretch module, wherein said skin-stretch module is disposed beneath said pseudo skin, and wherein said skin-stretch module measures an amount by which said user stretches said pseudo skin.

**20.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 2 further comprising a data processing system, wherein said palpation module generates a signal that is indicative of said change in position of said pseudo vein, and wherein said data processing system receives said signal.

**21.** (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising:

a rigid housing;

a first opening in said housing; and

a palpation module for enabling a user to palpate a pseudo vein, wherein said palpation module is disposed within said housing beneath said first opening, and further wherein said palpation module generates a magnetic force that opposes downward motion of said pseudo vein.

**22.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 21 further comprising pseudo skin, wherein said pseudo skin is disposed above said palpation module.

**23.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 22 wherein said pseudo skin obscures said pseudo vein from view of said user.

- 24.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 21 further comprising:  
a second opening in said housing; and  
a skin-stretch module, wherein said skin-stretch module is disposed within said housing beneath said pseudo skin and beneath said second opening, and wherein said skin-stretch module measures an amount by which said user stretches said pseudo skin.
- 25.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 21 further comprising a needle/catheter module, wherein a portion of said needle/catheter module is inserted into said housing during a simulated vascular-access procedure.
- 26.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 21 further comprising an electronics/communications interface, wherein said electronics/communications interface is disposed within said housing, and wherein said electronics/communications interface electrically couples said palpation module to a data processing system.
- 27.** (Previously Presented) An apparatus comprising a palpation module, wherein said palpation module comprises:  
a pseudo vein; and  
an arrangement for generating a first force, wherein:  
(a) said first force opposes a second force;  
(b) said second force is applied to said pseudo vein by a user; and  
(c) said first force is magnetic.
- 28.** (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 27 wherein said palpation module is operable to perform at least one of following: measure a change in position of said pseudo vein and vary a simulated stiffness of said pseudo vein.
- 29.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 27 said first force is generated by the interaction of two magnetic fields.
- 30.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 27 wherein said pseudo vein comprises a rigid member.

**31.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 27 wherein a magnitude of said first force is adjustable.

**32.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 27 wherein said palpation module further comprises:

a first plate, wherein said pseudo vein is disposed on said first plate, and wherein said first plate is movable toward a second plate; and

said second plate, wherein said second plate is disposed above said first plate in a fixed position, and wherein said second plate has an opening that is dimensioned and located to receive said pseudo vein.

**33.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 32 further comprising a sensor, wherein said sensor generates a signal that is indicative of a distance between said first plate and said second plate.

**34.** (Original) The apparatus of claim 27 further comprising pseudo skin, wherein said pseudo vein is disposed beneath said pseudo skin.

**35. – 38.** (Canceled)